



## **Reading the Landscapes of East Asia**

As an art educator I am on a continual quest to bring other disciplines into my classroom so that my students can see the connections that art makes to a society, a region and its people. Art education must cross disciplines and it is imperative for me to continue to pursue professional development that will enable me to implement content rich learning in my art classroom.

Attending the 'Reading the Landscapes of East Asia' seminar series has brought an endless array of background knowledge on East Asia along with a wealth of educational resources: websites, books, lesson plans, maps, handouts, videos/DVD's, as well as practical examples of successful teaching strategies and cross disciplines connections that I will bring into my teaching. I look forward to expanding my units on East Asia, making more literary connections and incorporating the multitude of learning that has occurred during this seminar series.

The first session of the seminar series, 'Korea in the World: A Geographic Focus' began with a lecture 'Geography, Language and Culture of Korea' by Hye-Sook Wang. Hye-Sook provided me with an excellent overview of Korea as she explored the great history of Korea and connected it with the geography, society and culture of the nation. I have several art lessons on Korea and Hye-Sook's lecture will provide my students with the knowledge they need to understand how the art of Korea connects to the people and their society. I found her lecture on '5 Things You Should Know About Koreans' to be an excellent entry discussion for my units on Korea, allowing my students to first see the Koreans as a people, vastly different from their neighbors, Japan and China, with a rich history and culture and that the people of Korea are 'unique, strong and evolved'. Her timeline of Korean history and the religions of this nation will connect the art of Korea and allow my students to see how the arts have evolved as well.

The afternoon session, co-presenters Tom Barner and Robert Vacca, provided me so many outstanding resources for my classroom, and I appreciated the resources provided were in both hard copy form as well as on a disk, excellent! I loved receiving the powerpoint and look forward to incorporating it into my unit on Korea, as it provides both a personal as well as a historical perspective on Korea, something my students so enjoy. I will use the book 'The Single Shard' by Linda Sue Park, an excellent addition to my students on the study of pottery, adding now the history of Celadon Pottery. I particularly loved the handout 'Vocabulary for Word Wall'-A Single Shard' as well as the many links and resources they provided. This handout will be added it to my pottery unit, great pottery vocabulary connecting it to literacy and the history of Korea.



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The handout from the NCTA on 'Parallel Peninsulas' will be incorporated into my art unit on Korea, excellent for helping my students to understand the differences between the two Koreas and comparing it geographically and demographically to Florida, a region that they do relate too. My students this year had lots of questions about the differences between North and South Korea and I have come away from this seminar series with a great deal of resources to help them understand. As an elementary educator, teaching students from grades 1-6, I find that they are in need of more global learning and understanding. I have discovered, over the last few years that my students are greatly lacking in East Asian studies, and especially in the studies of Korea, almost the forgotten nation. They are eager and curious and want to know, and the art curriculum is a wonderful way for introducing students to people from the world beyond their own. I have gained so much information and teaching ideas and strategies through this lecture series and my students will benefit greatly.

Young Un's lecture on 'Understanding Korea in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' will give my students more concrete information on the impact of unification, something we have discussed quite frequently. His views on the impact of unification and possible outcomes and concerns, as he addressed the effect on both nations from a military, economic and cultural view, were very interesting as we looked at both the benefits and the difficulties of this issue. His handout 'Why Study Korean History' is a valuable resource. McCann's lecture on 'Teaching Korean Sijo', gave me some great background information on the history of Korean landscape paintings, the connection it had to the Buddhist religion and understandings of the shift the Korean's took in the 18<sup>th</sup> C when they began painting their own landscapes instead of those of China. I know understand the importance of the mountains and the spiritual element they represent in the Korean landscape paintings and will incorporate the knowledge to my students in my art unit on Korea. I learned the tale of the magpie and the tiger and plan on developing a unit of study, incorporating folktales into my art lessons. I have seen numerous images of the tiger and the magpie and know that my students would enjoy the symbolism of this tale and interpreting it through the visual arts in a painting. The tale, rich and depicting Korea's history and culture would be a great cross discipline connection for my students. My students often complete a writing piece that reflects their visual art and I look forward to discovering more about the use of the Sijo, as an art form, exploring the internet links provided during the lecture. I have used Haiku on numerous occasions with my art students and would like to explore Sijo now too. "The Bamboo Grove-An Introduction to Sijo" is an excellent resource for my classroom on the history and implementation of Sijo and I look forward to sharing examples of this poetry form to my students as they too learn to write Sijo.

The booklet received during the lectures on Korea from The Korea Society' Brief History of Korea-A Bird's-Eye View- is an excellent resource for my students, especially the comparative



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chronology, looking at Korea's history in comparison to the world history, allowing my students to see how ancient Korea is and how rich is its history. The series of lectures on Korea provided me with a vast array of knowledge that will greatly supplement my unit on Korea in my classes. I also found the book *'Still Life With Rice'* by Helie Lee, an outstanding resource for my background knowledge of life in Korea, as she personally takes us on her family's life and travels through a changing Korea.

The next lecture series focused on Japan and it too proved to be a valuable addition to my studies thus far on Japan, providing me again with excellent resources, links, lesson plans and books to further my understanding of Japan. Piper Gaubatz's lecture on the *'Five Themes of Geography'* is a great introductory piece for my students as we explore Japan, connecting the geography to the people, culture and society of both the past and the present. It is an excellent piece that will help my students to understand Japan, both historically and presently. I enjoyed the session too provided by Arlene Kowal on the history and teaching of Haiku Poetry, as well as the activity she provided us with of using her photos to inspire our own Haiku poem. I liked the idea of a us as a group writing and sharing our own Haiku, something I haven't done in a long while, but a valid and important way to teach. I always use my own travel photos too as a source of inspiration for my students when we explore the a region that I have traveled too. I have also used art prints for starting points of Haiku, but will now add my photos to this activity as well. I received many resources and books during this session that will be invaluable to my teaching: 'From Images to Haiku', packet 'Haiku in the Classroom', map of Japan, 'Top Ten Things to Know About Japan in the Early Twenty-First Century', 'The Essential Haiku-Versions of Basho, Buson, & Issa' edited by Robert Hass.

Karla Drake's lecture on January 14<sup>th</sup> provided me with a wonderful introduction into Tanka Poetry, with historical connections and understandings. My students, all familiar with the Haiku as a form of poetry, will know explore the Tanka as an extension activity when studying the art of Korea. Both art forms, visual and literary, provide my students the opportunity for personal expression. Ted Mitchell, a Rhode Island educator, brought us an outstanding wealth of resources from his travels to Japan, through a historical and geographical journey. Ted's knowledge with utilizing the internet and web design was truly an inspiration to us all. His website is filled with so many outstanding resources and links.

I am so thankful for having this opportunity to attend a seminar series such as this that was so well organized and planned, bringing both top scholars and educators together to learn and develop new educational opportunities for both ourselves and for our students.